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December 15, 2021

City of Columbus Division of Sewerage & Drainage
1250 Fairwood Avenue
Columbus, OH 43206

ATTN: Mr. Greg Fedner, P.E., Section Manager, Plan Review Section

RE: **Type II Variance Request**
Rock City Church
CC TBD
PID# 31843201001000; 31843201002000

Mr. Fedner,

We would like to request two (2) Type II Variances from the City of Columbus' Storm Water Drainage Manual, revised May 2021, for the referenced project. They requests are as follows:

1. Pursuant to Section 3.4.1.2 of the Manual, an aquatic bench is required for all wet detention basins, and side slope for wet basins shall be no more than 4:1 side slopes. A Type II variance will be required to permit the use of a wall on one side of the proposed pond in lieu of a safety bench and 4:1 side slope; and
2. Pursuant to Section 4.3.1.1 of the Manual, a fifteen (15') foot wide vehicle access is required around the entire perimeter of a Stormwater Control Practice (SCP). A Type II variance will be required to exclude the full width access along the side (south) shared with the existing basin for HTA-Polaris, LLC

Exhibit Descriptions

Site exhibits are provided to show a fully compliant grading plan, a minimal impact grading plan, and a preferred alternative grading plan. The total site area is 32.21 acres, and the total disturbed area is 26.77 acres.

- **Full Compliant Alternative (See Exhibit 1)**
A fully compliant alternative would remove the retaining wall on the northwest side of the proposed pond and enlarge the pond so that a safety bench and 4:1 side slope area incorporated. Additionally, the full width maintenance access would be installed around the entire SCP. Adherence to these measures would mean the loss of roughly sixty-five (65) parking spaces for use by the church in the immediate area.
- **Minimal Impact Alternative (See Exhibit 2)**
A minimal impact alternative would remove the retaining wall on the northwest side of the proposed pond to gain the ability to grade down from the proposed edge of pavement to the basin at the 4:1 slope and provide the required aquatic bench. This would require splitting the single pond into two interconnected ponds and significantly reducing the storage capacity. In this iteration the full width maintenance access would be omitted to maximize pond detention and minimize underground storage. To offset the loss in storage from splitting the pond, an underground detention system would be added under the parking lot.

JOB #: 190566.002



- Preferred Alternative (See Exhibit 3)

This project is proposing a retaining wall on the northwest side of the proposed pond to maximize the available space to meet required storm water quality and quantity volume while avoiding the need for underground detention and loss of parking area. The total length of wall needed is approximately one hundred (100') feet and will be approximately five (5') feet in max height. Eliminating the full width maintenance access on the south side will also help prevent parking loss. Due to the wall, the 4:1 side slope requirement is not met, and a safety bench is not proposed because it would not be accessible. However, the sloped sides of the basin where there is no wall do meet the 4:1 side slope and aquatic bench requirements.

Hardships Description

The requirements to provide a full width maintenance access, 4:1 side slopes, and an aquatic safety bench around the entire perimeter of the SCP place hardships on the project. These hardships are described as follows:

- Parking

The area needed to satisfy the requirements of the manual is not currently accommodated where the SCP is intended. The only way to provide this area without additional SCP's is to lose roughly sixty-five (65) spaces in the immediate vicinity. Although the proposed site is showing a surplus of parking spaces required by zoning (1,780 spaces proposed and 1,209 spaces required), the developer requires 1,780 spaces to accommodate the additional number of patrons anticipated with the building addition.

Based on national church data, and the church's previous experience with their Hilliard site, the proposed number of parking spaces is what is sufficient to accommodate the amount of people this site will attract during the Sunday worship experiences. When the church opened its Hilliard site in 2019, it needed to quickly add 45% more parking spots than the required amount and is in the process of getting approval for additional parking. The proposed amount incorporates the lessons from the church's Hilliard site.

- Cost

Parking can be preserved on site by reducing the pond to constructable sizes without the need for a retaining wall. The loss of storage for this smaller pond, however, would need to be supplemented with another SCP. The best SCP to provide this additional storage needed within the space available is underground detention. The additional costs associated with an underground detention system of this size would equate to roughly 10% of the entire project. For a non-profit type of development like this, that is a severe economic hardship.



Justifications for Deviation

We feel the request for a variance and deviation from the above stated Manual requirements are justified by the following reasons:

- There are several developments in the immediate vicinity where retaining walls have been used for SCP's. Specific examples are CC-16295, CC-16925, and CC-17376.
- Adequate side slopes and aquatic benches are being provided around most of the perimeter of the SCP and sustained aquatic plant and wildlife will be supported to the maximum extent practical.
- Full width maintenance access will also be provided along most of the perimeter of the SCP.

Please review the above and let us know if the request for these variances is justified. Please also do not hesitate to contact this office with any questions, comments, or concerns. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

THE KLEINGERS GROUP

Brendan M. Fleming, P.E.
Project Engineer

cc: FILE